

Self-Rule for British Colonies

MAIN IDEA

EMPIRE BUILDING Britain allowed self-rule in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand but delayed it for Ireland.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are strong democracies today, while Ireland is divided.

TERMS & NAMES

- dominion
- Maori
- Aborigine
- penal colony
- home rule
- Irish Republican Army

SETTING THE STAGE By 1800, Great Britain had colonies around the world. These included outposts in Africa and Asia. In these areas, the British managed trade with the local peoples, but they had little influence over the population at large. In the colonies of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, on the other hand, European colonists dominated the native populations. As Britain industrialized and prospered in the 1800s, so did these colonies. Some were becoming strong enough to stand on their own.

Canada Struggles for Self-Rule

Canada was originally home to many Native American peoples. The first European country to colonize Canada was France. The earliest French colonists, in the 1600s and 1700s, had included many fur trappers and missionaries. They tended to live among the Native Americans. Some French intermarried with Native Americans.

Great Britain took possession of the country in 1763 after it defeated France in the French and Indian War. The French who remained lived mostly in the lower St. Lawrence Valley. Many English-speaking colonists arrived in Canada after it came under British rule. Some came from Great Britain, and others were Americans who had stayed loyal to Britain after the American Revolution. They settled separately from the French along the Atlantic seaboard and the Great Lakes.

French and English Canada Religious and cultural differences between the mostly Roman Catholic French and the mainly Protestant English-speaking colonists caused conflict in Canada. Both groups pressed Britain for a greater voice in governing their own affairs. In 1791 the British Parliament tried to resolve both issues by creating two new Canadian provinces. Upper Canada (now Ontario) had an English-speaking majority. Lower Canada (now Quebec) had a French-speaking majority. Each province had its own elected assembly.

The Durham Report The division of Upper and Lower Canada temporarily eased tensions. In both colonies, the royal governor and a small group of wealthy British held most of the power. But during the early 1800s, middle-class professionals in both colonies began to demand political and economic reforms. In Lower Canada, these demands were also fueled by French resentment toward British rule. In the late 1830s, rebellions broke out in both Upper and Lower



Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on the political events in each British colony that led to self-rule.

History in Depth



Acadians to Cajuns

Colonists from France founded the colony of Acadia on the eastern coast of what is now Canada in 1604. Tensions flared between these settlers and later arrivals from England and Scotland.

In 1713, the British gained control of Acadia and renamed it Nova Scotia (New Scotland). They expelled thousands of descendants of the original Acadians. Many eventually settled in southern Louisiana. Today, their culture still thrives in the Mississippi Delta area, where the people are called Cajuns (an alteration of Acadian).

Canada. The British Parliament sent a reform-minded statesman, Lord Durham, to investigate.

In 1839, Durham sent a report to Parliament that urged two major reforms. First, Upper and Lower Canada should be reunited as the Province of Canada, and British immigration should be encouraged. In this way, the French would slowly become part of the dominant English culture. Second, colonists in the provinces of Canada should be allowed to govern themselves in domestic matters. **A**

The Dominion of Canada By the mid-1800s, many Canadians believed that Canada needed a central government. A central government would be better able to protect the interests of Canadians against the United States, whose territory now extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. In 1867, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick joined the Province of Canada to form the Dominion of Canada. As a **dominion**, Canada was self-governing in domestic affairs but remained part of the British Empire.

Canada's Westward Expansion Canada's first prime minister, John MacDonal, expanded Canada westward by purchasing lands and persuading frontier territories to join the union. Canada stretched to the Pacific Ocean by 1871. MacDonal began the construction of a transcontinental railroad, completed in 1885.

Australia and New Zealand

The British sea captain James Cook claimed New Zealand in 1769 and part of Australia in 1770 for Great Britain. Both lands were already inhabited. In New Zealand, Cook was greeted by the **Maori**, a Polynesian people who had settled in New Zealand around A.D. 800. Maori culture was based on farming, hunting, and fishing.

When Cook reached Australia, he considered the land uninhabited. In fact, Australia was sparsely populated by **Aborigines**, as Europeans later called the native peoples. Aborigines are the longest ongoing culture in the world. These nomadic peoples fished, hunted, and gathered food.

Britain's Penal Colony Britain began colonizing Australia in 1788 with convicted criminals. The prisons in England were severely overcrowded. To solve this problem, the British government established a penal colony in Australia. A **penal colony** was a place where convicts were sent to serve their sentences. Many European nations used penal colonies as a way to prevent overcrowding of prisons. After their release, the newly freed prisoners could buy land and settle.

Free Settlers Arrive Free British settlers eventually joined the former convicts in both Australia and New Zealand. In the early 1800s, an Australian settler experimented with breeds of sheep until he found one that produced high quality wool and thrived in the country's warm, dry weather. Although sheep are not native to Australia, the raising and exporting of wool became its biggest business.

To encourage immigration, the government offered settlers cheap land. The population grew steadily in the early 1800s and then skyrocketed after a gold rush in 1851. The scattered settlements on Australia's east coast grew into separate colonies. Meanwhile, a few pioneers pushed westward across the vast dry interior and established outposts in western Australia.

MAIN IDEA

Recognizing Effects

A How do you think Durham's report affected French-speaking Canadians?

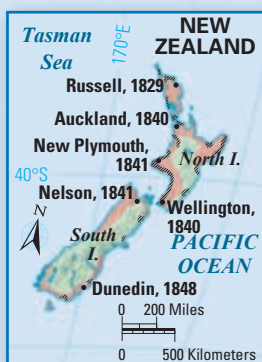


Australia and New Zealand to 1850

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INTERACTIVE MAP

Climate Regions

- Desert
- Grassland
- Mediterranean
- Rain forest
- Savanna
- Woodlands
- Densest Aborigine or Maori populations, around 1770
- Date of European settlement



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

1. **Region** What sort of climate region is found along the eastern coast of Australia?
2. **Region** What regions of Australia and New Zealand were most densely inhabited by native peoples?

Settling New Zealand European settlement of New Zealand grew more slowly. This was because Britain did not claim ownership of New Zealand, as it did Australia. Rather, it recognized the land rights of the Maori. In 1814, missionary groups began arriving from Australia seeking to convert the Maori to Christianity.

The arrival of more foreigners stirred conflicts between the Maori and the European settlers over land. Responding to the settlers' pleas, the British decided to annex New Zealand in 1839 and appointed a governor to negotiate with the Maori. In a treaty signed in 1840, the Maori accepted British rule in exchange for recognition of their land rights.

Self-Government Like Canadians, the colonists of Australia and New Zealand wanted to rule themselves yet remain in the British Empire. During the 1850s, the colonies in both Australia and New Zealand became self-governing and created parliamentary forms of government. In 1901, the Australian colonies were united under a federal constitution as the Commonwealth of Australia. During the early 1900s, both Australia and New Zealand became dominions.

The people of Australia and New Zealand pioneered a number of political reforms. For example, the secret ballot, sometimes called the Australian ballot, was first used in Australia in the 1850s. In 1893, New Zealand became the first nation in the world to give full voting rights to women. However, only white women gained these rights.

Status of Native Peoples Native peoples and other non-Europeans were excluded from democracy and prosperity. Diseases brought by the Europeans killed Aborigines and Maori. As Australian settlement grew, the colonists displaced or killed many Aborigines.

In New Zealand, tensions between settlers and Maori continued to grow after it became a British colony. Between 1845 and 1872, the colonial government fought the Maori in a series of wars. Reduced by disease and outgunned by British weapons, the Maori were finally driven into a remote part of the country. **B**

▼ This photograph shows a Maori warrior with traditional dress and face markings.



MAIN IDEA

Contrasting

B How did the colonial settlement of Australia and New Zealand differ?

The Irish Win Home Rule

English expansion into Ireland had begun in the 1100s, when the pope granted control of Ireland to the English king. English knights invaded Ireland, and many settled there to form a new aristocracy. The Irish, who had their own ancestry, culture, and language, bitterly resented the English presence. Laws imposed by the English in the 1500s and 1600s limited the rights of Catholics and favored the Protestant religion and the English language.

Over the years, the British government was determined to maintain its control over Ireland. It formally joined Ireland to Britain in 1801. Though a setback for Irish nationalism, this move gave Ireland representation in the British Parliament. Irish leader Daniel O’Connell persuaded Parliament to pass the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. This law restored many rights to Catholics.

The Great Famine In the 1840s, Ireland experienced one of the worst famines of modern history. For many years, Irish peasants had depended on potatoes as virtually their sole source of food. From 1845 to 1848, a plant fungus ruined nearly all of Ireland’s potato crop. Out of a population of 8 million, about a million people died from starvation and disease over the next few years.

During the famine years, about a million and a half people fled from Ireland. Most went to the United States; others went to Britain, Canada, and Australia. At home, in Ireland, the British government enforced the demands of the English landowners that the Irish peasants pay their rent. Many Irish lost their land and fell hopelessly in debt, while large landowners profited from higher food prices.

Demands for Home Rule During the second half of the 1800s, opposition to British rule over Ireland took two forms. Some Irish wanted independence for Ireland. A greater number of Irish preferred **home rule**, local control over internal

> Analyzing Primary Sources

Starvation in Ireland

A traveler described what he saw on a journey through Ireland in 1847:

PRIMARY SOURCE

We entered a cabin. Stretched in one dark corner, scarcely visible, from the smoke and rags that covered them, were three children huddled together, lying there because they were too weak to rise, pale and ghastly, their little limbs—on removing a portion of the filthy covering—perfectly emaciated, eyes sunk, voice gone, and evidently in the last stage of actual starvation.

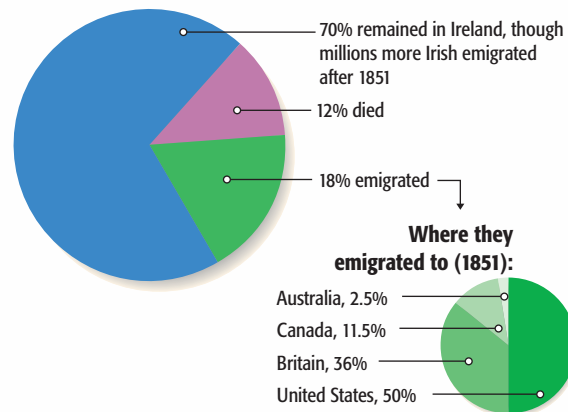
WILLIAM BENNETT, quoted in *Narrative of a Recent Journey of Six Weeks in Ireland*

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

- Determining Main Ideas** What was the effect of the destruction of Ireland’s potato crop on the population of Ireland?
- Clarifying** How did 18 percent of the population deal with the famine?
- Comparing** Which country received the most Irish emigrants?

The Great Famine, 1845–1851

Fate of the Irish during the famine:



Sources: R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600–1972*; D. Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration, 1804–1921*

Northern Ireland Today

When Northern Ireland decided to stay united with Great Britain, many Catholics there refused to accept the partition, or division. In the late 1960s, Catholic groups began to demonstrate for more civil rights.

Their protests touched off fighting between Catholics and Protestants. Militant groups on both sides engaged in terrorism. This violent period, called the “troubles,” continued into the 1990s.

In 1999, with a peace accord, Catholics and Protestants began sharing power in a new home-rule government. In May 2007, home rule returned under a new power-sharing government.

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INTERNET ACTIVITY Go online to research and design a Web page about the peace process in Northern Ireland today. Include key figures in the peace process, especially Gerry Adams and David Trimble.

matters only. The British, fearful of Irish moves toward independence, refused to consider either option.

One reason for Britain’s opposition to home rule was concern for Ireland’s Protestants. They feared being a minority in a country dominated by Catholics. Most Protestants lived in the northern part of Ireland, known as Ulster. Finally, in 1914, Parliament enacted a home rule bill for southern Ireland. Just one month before the plan was to take effect, World War I broke out in Europe. Irish home rule was put on hold.


Rebellion and Division Frustrated over the delay in gaining independence, a small group of Irish nationalists rebelled in Dublin during Easter week, 1916. British troops put down the Easter Rising and executed its leaders. Their fate, however, aroused wider popular support for the nationalist movement.

After World War I, the Irish nationalists won a victory in the elections for the British Parliament. To protest delays in home rule, the nationalist members decided not to attend Parliament. Instead, they formed an underground Irish government and declared themselves independent. The **Irish Republican Army** (IRA), an unofficial military force seeking independence for Ireland, staged a series of attacks against British officials in Ireland. The attacks sparked war between the nationalists and the British government.

In 1921, Britain divided Ireland and granted home rule to southern Ireland. Ulster, or Northern Ireland, remained a part of Great Britain. The south became a dominion called the Irish Free State. However, many Irish nationalists, led by Eamon De Valera, continued to seek total independence from Britain. In 1949, the Irish Free State declared itself the independent Republic of Ireland. 

MAIN IDEA

Evaluating Decisions

 Was Britain’s policy in dividing Ireland successful? Why or why not?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

TERMS & NAMES 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- dominion
- Maori
- Aborigine
- penal colony
- home rule
- Irish Republican Army

USING YOUR NOTES

2. In what ways was Ireland different from the other three colonies?

Country	Political Events
Canada	
Australia	
New Zealand	

MAIN IDEAS

3. What were the two major reforms urged by the Durham report?
4. What was unusual about the first European settlers in Australia?
5. What are the main countries to which the Irish emigrated during the famine?

CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING

6. **COMPARING** How was Britain’s policy toward Canada beginning in the late 1700s similar to its policy toward Ireland in the 1900s?
7. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** What impact did the Great Famine have on the population of Ireland?
8. **CLARIFYING** Why did Britain create Upper Canada and Lower Canada, and who lived in each colony?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **EMPIRE BUILDING** Britain encouraged emigration to each of the colonies covered in this section. What effects did this policy have on these areas? Write a **paragraph** in which you provide an explanation.

MULTIMEDIA ACTIVITY CREATING A BAR GRAPH



Use the Internet to find information on Irish emigration to the United States. Create a **bar graph** showing the years when the largest numbers of Irish came to the United States.

INTERNET KEYWORD
Irish immigration